

***“The ability to learn is a function of your willingness to go out of your comfort zone.”***

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To be honest, I didn't quite know what I signed up for when I was unexpectedly offered a regional position - due to my overseas operations experience when I was with Shell - by the then interim TM CEO Tan Sri Dato' Sri Abdul Wahid Omar.

I didn't know who I would be reporting to, so as HR it was exciting when Region-Co CEO was finally revealed as Tan Sri Jamal. From that day onward, for me an exciting new vision unfolded. I'm glad I was there when it all began and we had autonomy at our corporate headquarters to form policies, not just to implement them.

Some of the key milestones for me were Axiata's listing on Bursa Malaysia, the launch of a new brand, the fiery first Axiata Senior Leadership forum, my introduction to the board and socialising in leadership circles with other GLCs. I was so excited when I saw the first TVC and the billboards on Jalan Sultan Ismail that I felt the whole world would be as excited as me. I felt so proud to showcase my company.

What I treasure the most is the learning insights, my non-exhaustive list includes:

- Diversity is necessary not for just widening the talent pool, but for raising performance standards. Like the time when I was always top of my class in a village primary school, as opposed to my urban missionary secondary school, resulting in my first-term grades slipping down the ranks. Axiata is such a place, to raise standards.
- Focus is absolutely key. In as much as we want to expand in every direction, given the possibilities, it will not create impact. Instead, it will lead to a 'dilutive' effect. From leading the AYTP, I learned to set a specific vision or goals but deliver them creatively.
- The ability to learn is a function of your willingness to go out of your comfort zone. Instead of being safe and "narrow", if you risk embracing changes and situations (despite not always knowing if the end result will end up positive) you will grow "broader" and stronger.

